THE LOG-CABIN LADY

AN ANONYMOUS AUTOBIOGRAPHY

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They served tea to the king, the queen, the general of the American army, and other important people.

FRONTISPIECE. *See page* 89.

THE LOG-CABIN LADY

AN ANONYMOUS AUTOBIOGRAPHY

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

"The Log-Cabin Lady" is one of the texts selected by the Relief Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for study in Biography. Lessons based on this book will appear in the Relief Society Magazine for 1937–8. The objective of this course is the appreciation of literature as an explanation of life.

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PREFACE

THE story of The Log-Cabin Lady is one of the annals of America. It is a moving record of the conquest of self-consciousness and fear through mastery of manners and customs. It has been written by one who has not sacrificed the strength and honesty of her pioneer girlhood, but who added to these qualities that graciousness and charm which have given her distinction on two continents.

I have been asked to tell how the story of The Log-Cabin Lady came to be written. At a luncheon given at the Colony Club in 1920, I was invited to talk about Madame Curie. There were, at that table, a group of important women.

When I had finished the story of the great scientist, whose service to humanity was halted by lack of laboratory equipment,

and of the very radium which she had herself discovered, one guest asked: "Why do you spend your life with a woman's magazine when you could do big work like serving Madame Curie?" "I believe," I replied, "that a woman's magazine is one of the biggest services that can be rendered in this country."

My challenge was met with scorn by one of the women upon whose education and accomplishments a fortune had been spent. "It is stupid," she said, "to print articles about bringing up children and furnishing houses, setting tables and feeding families — or whether it is good form for the host to suggest another service at the dinner table."

"There are twenty million homes in America," I answered. "Only eight per cent of these have servants in them. In the other ninety-two per cent the women do their own housework; bring up their own children, and

take an active part in the life and growth of America. *They* are the people who help make this country the great nation that it is."

After luncheon one of the guests, a woman of great social prominence, distinguished both in her own country and abroad, asked me to drive downtown with her. When we entered her car she said, with much feeling — "You must go on with the thing you are doing."

Believing she referred to the Curie campaign, I replied that I had committed myself to the work and could not abandon it.

"I was not referring to the Curie campaign," she replied, "but to the *Delineator*. You are right; it is of vital importance to serve the great masses of people. *I* know. It will probably surprise you to learn that when I was fourteen years old I had never seen a table napkin. My family were pioneers in the Northwest and were struggling

for mere existence. There was no time for the niceties of life. And yet, people like my family and myself are worth serving and saving. I have known what it means to lie awake all night, suffering with shame because of some stupid social blunder which had made me appear ridiculous before my husband's family or his friends."

This was a most amazing statement from a woman known socially on two continents, and famed for her *savoir faire.*

There were tears in her eyes when she made her confession. She was stirred by a very real and deep emotion. It had been years, she said, since the old recollections had come back to her, but she had been moved by my plea for service to home women and to the great mass of ordinary American people.

She told me that while living abroad she had often met American girls — intelligent women, well bred, the finest stuff in the

world—who suffered under a disadvantage, because they lacked a little training in the social amenities.

"It has been a satisfaction and a compensation to me," she added, "to be able sometimes to serve these fellow countrywomen of mine."

And right there was born the idea which culminated in the writing of this little book. I suggested that a million women could be helped by the publishing of her own story.

The thought was abhorrent to her. Her experience was something she had never voiced in words. It would be too intimate a discussion of herself and her family. She was sure her relatives would bitterly oppose such a confession.

It took nearly a year to persuade this remarkable woman to put down on paper, from her recollections and from her old letters home, this simple story of a fine American life. She consented finally to write frag-

ments of her life, anonymously. We were pledged not to reveal her identity. A few changes in geography and time were made in her manuscript, but otherwise the story is true to life, laden with adventure, spirit and the American philosophy. She has refused to accept any remuneration for the magazine publication or for royalties on the book rights. The money accruing from her labor is being set aside in The Central Union Trust Company of New York City as a trust fund to be used in some charitable work. She has given her book to the public solely because she believes that it contains a helpful message for other women. It is the gracious gift of a woman who has a deep and passionate love for her country, and a tender responsiveness to the needs of her own sex.

MARIE M. MELONEY.

September 1, 1922.

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THE LOG-CABIN LADY

THE LOG-CABIN LADY

I

I WAS born in a log cabin. I came to my pioneer mother in one of Wisconsin's bitterest winters.

Twenty-one years later I was sailing for England, the wife of a diplomat who was one of Boston's wealthy and aristocratic sons.

The road between — well, let it speak for itself. Merely to set this story on paper opens old wounds, deep, but mercifully healed these many years. Yet, if other women may find here comfort and illumination and a certain philosophy, I am glad, and I shall feel repaid.

The first thing I remember is being grateful for windows. I was three years old. My mother had set me to play on a mattress carefully placed in the one ray of sunlight

streaming through the one glass window of our log cabin. Baby as I was, I had ached in the agonizing cold of a pioneer winter. Lying there, warmed by that blessed sunshine, I was suddenly aware of wonder and joy and gratitude. It was gratitude for glass, which could keep out the biting cold and let in the warm sun.

To this day windows give me pleasure.

My father was a school-teacher from New England, where his family had taught the three R's and the American Constitution since the days of Ben Franklin's study club.

My mother was the daughter of a hard-working Scotch immigrant. Father's family set store on ancestry. Mother's side was more practical.

The year before my birth these two young people started West in a prairie schooner to stake a homestead claim. Father's seaman's chest held a dictionary, Bancroft's

History of the United States, several books of mathematics, Plutarch's Lives, a history of Massachusetts, a leather-bound file of Civil War records, Thackeray's "Vanity Fair", Shakespeare in two volumes, and the "Legend of Sleepy Hollow." My mother took a Bible.

I can still quote pages from every one of those books. Until I was fourteen I saw no others, except a primer, homemade, to teach me my letters. Because "Vanity Fair" contained simpler words than the others, it was given me first; so at the age of seven I was spelling out pages of the immortal Becky.

My mother did not approve, but father laughed and protested that the child might as well begin with good things.

After mother's eighth and last baby, she lay ill for a year. The care of the children fell principally on my young shoulders. One day I found her crying.

"Mary," she said, with a tenderness that was rare, "if I die, you must take care of all your brothers and sisters. You will be the only woman within eighteen miles."

I was ten years old.

That night and many other nights I lay awake, trembling at the possibility of being left the only woman within eighteen miles.

But mother did not die. I must have been a sturdy child; for, with the little help father and his homestead partner could spare, I kept that home going until she was strong again.

Every fall the shoemaker made his rounds through the country, reaching our place last, for beyond us lay only virgin forest and wild beasts. His visit thrilled us more than the arrival of any king to-day. We had been cut off from the world for months. The shoemaker brought news from neighbors eighteen, forty, sixty, even a hundred and fifty miles away. Usually he brought

a few newspapers too, treasured afterward for months. He remained, a royal guest, for many days, until all the family was shod.

Up to my tenth birthday we could not afford the newspaper subscription. But after that times were a little better, and the Boston *Transcript* began to come at irregular intervals. It formed our only tie with civilization, except for the occasional purely personal letter from "back home."

When I was fourteen three tremendous events had marked my life: sunlight through a window-pane; the logrolling on the river when father added two rooms to our cabin; and the night I thought mother would die and leave me the only woman in eighteen miles.

But the fourth event was the most tremendous. One night father hurried in without even waiting to unload or water his

team. He seemed excited, and handed my mother a letter.

Our Great-Aunt Martha had willed father her household goods and personal belongings and a modest sum that to us was a fortune. Some one back East "awaited his instructions."

Followed many discussions, but in the end my mother gained her way. Great-Aunt Martha's house goods were sold at auction. Father, however, insisted that her "personal belongings" be shipped to Wisconsin.

After a long, long wait, one day father and I rose at daybreak and rode thirty-six miles in a springless wagon, over ranchmen's roads ("the giant's vertebræ," Jim Hill's men called it) to the nearest express station, returning with a trunk and two packing cases.

It was a solemn moment when the first

box was opened. Then mother gave a cry of delight. Sheets and bedspreads edged with lace! Real linen pillowcases with crocheted edgings. Soft woolen blankets and bright handmade quilts. Two heavy, lustrous table-cloths and two dozen napkins, one white set hemmed, and one red-and-white, bordered with a soft fringe.

What the world calls wealth has come to me in after years. Nothing ever equaled in my eyes the priceless value of Great-Aunt Martha's "personal belongings."

I was in a seventh heaven of delight. My father picked up the books and began to read, paying no attention to our ecstasies over dresses and ribbons, the boxful of laces, or the little shell-covered case holding a few ornaments in gold and silver and jet.

We women did not stop until we had explored every corner of that trunk and the two packing boxes. Then I picked up a napkin.

"What are these for?" I asked curiously.

My father slammed his book shut. I had never seen such a look on his face.

"How old are you, Mary?" he demanded suddenly.

I told him that I was going or fifteen.

"And you never saw a table napkin?"

His tone was bitter and accusing. I did n't understand — how could I? Father began to talk, his words growing more and more bitter. Mother defended herself hotly. To-day I know that justice was on her side. But in that first adolescent self-consciousness my sympathies were all with father. Mother had neglected us — she had not taught us to use table napkins! Becky Sharp used them. People in history used them. I felt sure that Great-Aunt Martha would have been horrified, even in heaven, to learn I had never even seen a table napkin.

Our parents' quarrel dimmed the ecstasy

of the "personal belongings." From that time we used napkins and a table-cloth on Sundays — that is, when any one remembered it was Sunday.

Great-Aunt Martha's napkins opened up a new world for me, and they strengthened father's determination to give his children an education. The September before I reached seventeen, we persuaded mother to let me go to Madison and study for a half year.

So great was my eagerness to learn from books, that I had given no thought to people. Madison, my first town, showed me that my clothes were homemade and tacky. Other girls wore store shoes and what seemed to me beautifully made dresses. I was a backwoods gawk. I hated myself and our home.

With many cautions, father had intrusted eighty dollars to me for the half year's expenses. I took the money and bought my

first pair of buttoned shoes and a store dress with nine gores and stylish mutton-leg sleeves! It was poor stuff, not warm enough for winter, and, together with a new coat and hat, made a large hole in my funds.

I found work in a kindly family, where, in return for taking care of an old lady, I received room and board and two dollars a week. Four hours of my day were left for school.

The following February brought me an appointment as teacher in a district school, at eighteen dollars a month and "turn-about" boarding in farmers' families.

The next two years were spent teaching and attending school in Madison. When I was twenty, a gift from father added to my savings and made possible the realization of one of my dreams. I went East for a special summer course.

No tubes shuttled under the Hudson in those days. From the ferry-boat I was sud-

denly dazzled with the vision of a towering gold dome rising above the four and five-story structures. The New York *World* building was then the tallest in the world. To me it was also the most stupendous.

Impulsively I turned to a man leaning on the ferry-boat railing beside me.

"Is n't that the most wonderful thing in the world?" I gasped.

"Not quite," he answered, and looked at me.

His look made me uncomfortable. I could have spoken to any stranger in Madison without embarrassment. It took me about twenty years to understand why a plain, middle-aged woman may chat with a strange man anywhere on earth, while the same conversation cheapens a good-looking young girl.

That summer I met my future husband. He was doing research work at Columbia,

and we ran across each other constantly in the library. I fairly lived there, for I found myself, for the first time, among a wealth of books, and I read everything — autobiographies, histories, and novels good and bad.

Tom's family and most of his friends were out of town for July and August. I had never met any one like him, and he had never dreamed of any one like me. We were friends in a week and sweethearts in a month.

Instead of joining his family, Tom stayed in New York and showed me the town. He took me to my first plays. Even now I know that "If I Were King" and "The Idol's Eye", with Frank Daniels, were good.

One day we went driving in an open carriage — his. It was upholstered in soft fawn color, the coachman wore fawn-colored livery, and the horses were beautiful. I

was very happy. When we reached my boarding house again, I jumped out. I was used to hopping from spring wagons.

"Please don't do that again, Mary," reproved Tom, very gently. "You might hurt yourself." That amused me, until a look from the coachman suddenly conveyed to me that I had made a *faux pas*.

Not long after I hurried off a street car ahead of Tom. This time he said nothing, but I have not forgotten the look on his face.

Over our marvelous meals in marvelous restaurants Tom delighted to get me started about home. Great-Aunt Martha's "personal belongings" amused him hugely. He never tired of the visiting shoemaker, nor of the carpenter who declared indignantly that if we wore decent clothes we would n't need our bench seats planed smooth. But some things I never told — about the table napkins, for instance.

We were married in September. Our honeymoon we spent fishing and "roughing it" in the Canadian wilds. I felt at home and blissful. I could cook and fish and make a bed in the open as well as any man.

It was heaven; but it left me entirely unprepared for the world I was about to enter.

Not once did Tom say: "Mary, we do this [or that] in our family." He was too happy, and I suppose he never thought of it. As for me, I wasted no worry on his family. They would be kind and sympathetic and simple, like Tom. They would love me and I would love them.

The day after we returned from Canada to New York I spent looking over Tom's "personal belongings" — as great a revelation as Aunt Martha's. His richly bound books, his beautiful furniture, his pictures — everything was perfect.

That night Tom made an announcement:

"The family gets home to-night, and they will come to call to-morrow."

"Why don't we go to the station to meet them?" I suggested.

To-day I appreciate better than I could then the gentle tact with which Tom told me his family was strong on "good form", and that the husband's family calls on the bride first.

My husband's family came, and I realized that I was a mere baby in a new world—a complicated and not very friendly world, at that. Though they never put it into words, they made me understand, in their cruel, polite way, that Tom was the hope of the family, and his sudden marriage to a stranger had been a great shock, if not more.

The beautiful ease of my husband's women-folk filled me with admiration and despair. I felt guilty of something. I was queer. Their voices, the intonation, even

the tilt of their chins, seemed to stamp these new "in-laws" as aristocrats of another race. Yet the same old New England stock that sired their ancestors produced my father's fathers.

Theirs had stayed in Boston, and had had time to teach their children grace and refinement and subtleties. Mine fought for their existence in a new country. And when men and women fight for existence life becomes very simple.

I FELT only my own misery that day. Now I realize that the meeting between Tom's mother and his wife was a mutual misery. I was crude. No doubt, to her, I seemed even common. With every one except Tom I seemed awkward and stupid. Poor mother-in-law!

When she rose to go, I saw her to her carriage. She was extremely insistent that I should not. But this was Tom's mother,

and I was determined to leave no friendly act undone. At home it would have been an offense not to see the company to their wagon. Even in Madison we would have escorted a caller to his carriage.

Again it was the coachman who with one chill look warned me that I had sinned.

Before Tom came home that afternoon he called on his mother, so no explanations from me were necessary. He knew it all, and doubtless much more than had escaped me. Like the princely gentleman he always was, the poor boy tried to soften that afternoon's blows by saying social customs were stupid and artificial and I knew all the important things in life. The other few little things and habits of his world he could easily tell me.

Few — and little! There were thousands, and they loomed bigger each day. Moreover, Tom did not tell me. Either,

manlike, he forgot, or he was afraid of hurting my feelings.

One of the few things Tom did tell me I was forever forgetting. Napkins belonged to Sundays at home, and they were not washed often. It was a long-standing habit, to save back-breaking work for mother, to fold my napkin neatly after meals. Unlearning that and acquiring the custom of mussing up one's napkin and leaving it carelessly on the table was the meanest work of my life.

Interesting guests came to Tom's house, and I would grow absorbed in their talk. Not until we were leaving the table would I realize that my napkin lay neatly folded and squared in the midst of casually rumpled heaps.

One night, years later, I sat between Jim Hill and Senator Bailey of Texas at a dinner. Both men folded their napkins. I loved them for it.

DURING that first year Tom made up a little theater party for a classmate who had just married a Philadelphia girl. With memories of Ben Franklin, William Penn, Liberty Bell, and all the grand old characters of the City of Brotherly Love, I looked forward eagerly to making a new friend.

The Philadelphian was even more languid than Tom's mother. She chopped her words and there were no *r's* in her English. I tried to break the ice by talking of the traditions of her city. She was bored. She knew only Philadelphia's social register. Just to play tit for tat, twice during the evening I quoted from "Julius Cæsar"—and scored!

We had just settled down in old Martin's Restaurant for after-theater supper when two tall gentlemen entered the room.

"There's Tom Platt and Chauncey Depew," remarked Tom's friend casually.

United States senators are important people in Wisconsin — at least, they were when I was young. If a senator visited our community, everybody turned out. I knew much of both these men, and Tom had often spoken warmly of Depew. As they approached our table, Tom and his friend both stood up. Thrilled, I rose hastily. My eyes were too busy to see Tom's face, and I did not realize until afterward that the only other woman had remained coolly seated.

On our way home, Tom told me, in his gentle way, never to rise from a dining table to acknowledge an introduction even to a woman — or a senator. That night a tormenting devil with the face of the other woman kept me awake. For the first time since my marriage I felt homesick for the prairies.

And then we were invited to visit Tom's Aunt Elizabeth in Boston and meet the

whole family. I was sick with dread. I begged Tom to tell me some of the things I should and should not do.

"Be your own sweet self and they'll love you," he promised, kissing me. He meant it, dear soul; but I knew better.

From the very first minute, Tom's Aunt Elizabeth made me conscious of her disapproval. In after years I won the old lady's affection and real respect, but I never spent a completely happy hour in her presence.

The night we arrived she gave me a formal dinner. Some dozen additional guests dropped in later, and I was bewildered by new faces and strange names. Later in the evening I noticed a distinguished-looking middle-aged gentleman standing alone just outside the drawing-room door. Hurrying out, I invited him to come in. He inquired courteously if there was anything he could do for me.

"Yes, indeed," I assured him. "Come in and talk to me."

He looked shy and surprised. I insisted.

Then Tom's aunt called me and, drawing me hastily into a corner, demanded why I was inviting a servant into her drawing-room.

"Servant! He looks like a senator," I protested. "He's dressed exactly like every other man at the party and he looks twice as important as most of them."

"Didn't you notice he addressed you as 'Madam'?" pursued Aunt Elizabeth.

"But it's perfectly proper to call a married woman 'Madam.' Foreigners always do," I defended.

"Can't you tell a servant when you see one?" inquired the old lady icily.

I begged to know how one could. All Boston was summed up in her answer: "You are supposed to *know* the other people."

Tom's wife could have drowned in a thimble.

THE third day of our visit, we were at the dinner table, when I saw Aunt Elizabeth's face change — for the worse. Her head went up higher and her upper lip drew longer. Finally she turned to me.

"Why do you cut your meat like a dog's dinner?" she snapped.

Tom's protesting exclamation did not stop her.

I laid my knife and fork on my plate and folded my hands in my lap to hide their trembling.

Time may dim many hurts, but with the last flicker of intelligence I shall remember that scene. Even then, in a flash, I saw the symbolism of it.

On one side — rare mahogany, shining silver, deft servants, napkins to rumple, leisure for the niceties of life. On the other

hand — a log cabin, my tired mother with new babies always coming, father slaving to homestead a claim and push civilization a little farther over our American continent.

A great tenderness for my parents filled my heart and overflowed in my eyes. I have, I confess, had moments of bitterness toward them. But that was not one of them.

"I think I can tell you," I answered, as quietly as I could. "It's very simple. I was the first baby, and mother cut up my food for me. After a while she cut up food for two babies. By the time the third came, I had to do my own cutting. Naturally, I did it just as mother had. Then I began to help cut up food for the other babies. It's a baby habit. And I must now learn to cut one bite at a time like a civilized grown person."

Even Aunt Elizabeth was silenced. But Tom rose from the table, swearing. My

father would not have permitted a cow-puncher to use such language before my mother. But I loved Tom for it.

However, I did not sleep that night.

Next morning Tom's Aunt Elizabeth apologized, and for Back Bay was really unbending.

Some days later we returned to New York, and I thought my troubles were over for a time. But the first night Tom came home full of excitement. He had been appointed to the diplomatic corps, and we were to sail for England within a month!

The news struck chill terror to my heart. With so much still to learn in my native America, what on earth should I do in English society?

II

MORE than two months passed after the night my husband announced his foreign appointment before we sailed for England.

I planned to study and to have long talks with him about the customs of fashionable and diplomatic Europe, but alas! I reckoned without the friends and pretended friends who claim the time of a man of Tom's importance. Besides, he and I had so many other things to discuss.

So the sailing time approached, and then he announced that we were to be presented at court! I was thrilled half with fear and half with joy.

I remembered from my reading of history that some of England's kings had not spoken English and that French had been the court language. I visited a bookstore

and purchased what was recommended as an easy road to French, and spent all morning learning to say, "*l'orange est un fruit.*" I read the instructions for placing the tongue and puckering the lips and repeated *les* and *las* until I was dizzy. Then I looked through our bookcases for a life of Benjamin Franklin. I knew he had gone to court and "played with queens."

But the great statesman-author-orator gave me no guide to correct form or English social customs. Instead I grew so interested in the history of his work in England and France and in his inspiring achievement in obtaining recognition and credit for the United States that dinner time arrived before I realized I had not discovered what language was spoken at court, nor what one talked about, nor if one talked at all.

Tom roared when I made my confession. With his boyish good humor he promised to answer all my questions on board ship.

So, without a care in those delicious days that followed, I wandered down Sixth Avenue to New York's then most correct shops, buying clothes and clothes and *clothes.* I bought practical and impractical gifts for the twins back in Wisconsin and for all the family and those good friends who had helped me through Madison.

The week before we sailed my husband said, out of a clear sky: "Be sure you have the right clothes, Mary. The English are a conservative lot." Suddenly I was conscious again that I did not know the essential things the wife of a diplomat ought to know — what to wear and when, a million and one tremendous social trifles.

THE moment our magnificent liner left the dock I heaved a sigh of relief. Tom would be mine for two whole weeks, and all the questions I had saved up would be answered. That evening he announced:

"We don't dress for dinner the first night out."

"Dress for dinner?" I asked. "What do you mean?"

And then very gently he gave me my first lesson. I had never seen anything bigger than a ferry-boat. How could I guess that even on an ocean liner we did not leave formality behind? The "party dresses", so carefully selected, the long, rich velvet cape I had thought outrageously extravagant, and the satin slippers and the suède — I had packed them all carefully in the trunk and sent them to the hold of the ship. But, with the aid of a little cash, the steward finally produced my treasure trunk, and thereafter I dressed for dinner.

The two weeks I had expected my husband to give me held no quiet hours. There is no such thing, except when one is seasick, as being alone aboard a ship. Tom was popular, good at cards and deck games, al-

ways ready to play. And the fourth day out I was too ill to worry about the customs at the Court of St. James.

It was not until just before we reached England that I began to feel myself again. I stood on deck, thrilled with the tall ships and the steamers, the fishing smacks and the smaller craft in Southampton harbor.

"What will be the first thing you do in London?" somebody asked me.

"Go to Mayfair to find the home of *Becky Sharp,*" I answered.

Becky Sharp was as much a part of English history to me as Henry VIII or Anne Boleyn or William the Conqueror. When my husband and I were alone he said: "I think they have picked out No. 21 Curzon Street as the house where *Becky Sharp* is supposed to have lived. But what a funny thing for you to want to see first!"

I remembered what old *Lord Steyne* had said to *Becky:* "You poor little earthen pip-

kin. You want to swim down the stream with great copper kettles. All women are alike. Everybody is striving for what is not worth the having."

I was quite sure I did not want to drift down the stream with copper kettles. I only wanted to be with Tom, to see England with him, to enjoy Dr. Johnson's haunts, to go to the "Cheddar Cheese" and the Strand, to Waterloo Bridge, and down the road the Romans built before England was England.

I wanted to see the world without the world seeing me. In my heart was no desire to be a copper kettle. But I had been cast into the stream, and down it I must go, like a little fungus holding to the biggest copper kettle I knew.

I told my husband this. It was the first time he had been really irritated with me. "Why do you worry about these things?" he protested. "You have a good head and

a good education. You are the loveliest woman in England. Be your own natural self and the English will love you." But I remembered another occasion when he had told me to be my own natural sweet self.

"How about what happened to *Becky?*" I asked.

Tom went into a rage. "Why do you insist on comparing yourself with that little ——!" The word he used was an ugly one. I did not speak to him again until after we had passed the government inspectors.

I SHALL never forget my first day in London, the old, quiet city where everybody seemed so comfortable and easy-going. There was no show, no pretense. The people in the shops and on the street bore the earmarks of thrift. I understood where New England got its spirit.

The first morning at the Alexandra Hotel, Tom fell naturally into the Eu-

ropean habit of having coffee and fruit and a roll brought to his bed. I wanted to go down to the dining room. My husband said it was not done and I would be lonesome. The days of ranch life had taught me to get up with the chickens. But it was not done in London. The second morning the early sun was too much for me. I dressed, left the hotel, and walked for several hours before a perfect servant brought shining plates and marmalade, fruit and coffee to my big husky football player's bedside. I have lived many years in Europe, but I have never grown used to having breakfast brought to my room.

That second rainy morning Tom left me alone with the promise of being back for luncheon. I picked up a London morning paper and glanced at the personal column. I have read it every day since when I could get hold of the London *Times*. All of human nature and the ups and downs of man

are there, from secondhand lace to the mortgaged jewels of broken-down nobility, from sporting games and tickets for sale to relatives wanted, and those mysterious, suggestive, unsigned messages from home or to home. I read the news of the war. We in America did not know there was a war. But Greece and Crete were at each other's throats, and Turkey was standing waiting to crowd the little ancient nation into Armenia or off the map. There was the Indian famine— We did not talk about it at home, but it had first place in the London paper. And the Queen's birthday,—it was to be celebrated by feeding the poor of East London and paying the debts of the hospitals. There was something so humane, so kindly, so civilized about it all! "I love England," I said, and that first impression balanced the scale many a time later when I did not love her.

THE third or fourth day brought an invitation to dine at a famous house on Grosvenor Square—*with a duke!*

I pestered my husband with questions. What should I wear? What should I talk about? He just laughed.

The paper had reported a "levee ordered by the queen", describing the gowns and jewels worn by the ladies.

I had little jewelry—a diamond ring, which Tom gave me before we were married, a bracelet, two brooches, and a string of gold beads, which were fashionable in America. I put them all on with my best bib and tucker. When we were dressed, Tom gave me one look and said, "Why do you wear all that junk?" I took off one of the brooches and the string of gold beads.

When our carriage drew up to the house on Grosvenor Square, liveried servants stood at each side of the door, liveried servants guided us inside. There was a gold

carpet, paintings of ladies and gentlemen in gorgeous attire, and murals and tapestries in the marble halls. But I quickly forgot all of this grandeur listening to the names of guests being called off as they entered the drawing-room: Mr. Gladstone and Mrs. Gladstone, Lord Rosebery and the Marquis of Salisbury, Mrs. Humphry Ward, looking fatter and older than I had expected, officers, colonels, viscounts, and ladies, and then Tom and Mary — but they were not called off that way.

I wanted to meet Mr. Gladstone, and hoped I might even be near him at dinner; but I sat between a colonel and a young captain of the Scots Greys.

Mr. Gladstone was on the other side of the table. It was a huge table, more than five feet wide and very long. My husband was somewhere out of sight at the other end. Mr. Gladstone mentioned the fund being

raised for the victims of the Paris Opéra Comique fire. It is good form to be silent in the presence of death, especially when death is colossal, and the English never fail to follow good form. There was a sudden lull at our end of the table.

It was I who broke that silence. I was touched by the generosity of England, and said so. Since my arrival I had daily noted that England was giving to India, sending relief to Greece and Armenia, raising a fund for the fire sufferers, and celebrating the Queen's Jubilee by feeding the poor. I addressed my look and my admiring words to Mr. Gladstone.

Either my sincerity or the embarrassment he knew would follow my disregard of "the thing that is done" moved Mr. Gladstone's sympathy. He smiled across the table at me and answered, "I am so glad you see these good points of England." It was about the most gracious thing that was ever

done to me in my life. In England it is bad form to speak across the table. One speaks to one's neighbor on the right or to one's neighbor on the left; but the line across the table is foreign soil and must not be shouted across.

That night my husband said: "I forgot to tell you. They never talk across the table in England." I chided him, and with some cause. I had soon discovered that in England, as in America, it was not enough to be "my own natural self."

But I came to love Mr. Gladstone. Long after that I told him the story of Mrs. Grant, who, when an awkward young man had broken one of her priceless Sèvres after-dinner coffee cups, dropped hers on the floor to meet him on the same level. "Any woman who, to put any one at ease, will break a priceless Sèvres cup is heroic," I said. His answer, though flippant, was pleasant: "Any man who would not smile

across the table at a lovely woman is a fool."

Mr. Gladstone always wore a flower in his button-hole, a big, loose collar that never fitted, a floppy black necktie, and trousers that needed a valet's attention. He was the greatest combination of propriety and utter disregard of conventions I had ever seen.

The event next in importance to a presentation at court was a tea at which the tea planter Sir Thomas Lipton was one of the guests. He was not Sir Thomas then, but was very much in the limelight, having contributed twenty-five thousand pounds to the fund collected by the Princess of Wales to feed the poor of London in commemoration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.

The Earl of Lathom, then the Lord Chamberlain, who looked like Santa Claus and smiled like Andrew Carnegie, was among the guests; so were Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone. Since the night he had talked

to me across the table I always felt that Mr. Gladstone was my best friend in England. He had a sense of humor, so I said: "Is there anything pointed in asking the tea king to a tea?" That amused Gladstone. He could not forgive Lipton parting his hair in the middle.

That night I repeated my joke to Tom. Instead of smiling, he said: "That's not the way to get on in England. It's too *Becky Sharpish.*"

And then came the day of the queen's salon. Victoria did not often have audiences, the Prince of Wales or some other member of the royal family usually holding levees and receiving presentations in her name.

Tom had warned me that there were certain clothes to be worn at a presentation. I asked one of my American friends at the embassy, who directed me to a hairdresser — the most important thing, it seemed, being

one's head. She told me also to wear full evening dress, with long white gloves, and to remove the glove of the right hand.

The hairdresser asked about my jewels. Remembering what Tom had said about "junk", I said I would wear no jewels. She was horrified. I would have to wear some, she insisted, if only a necklace of pearls. She tactfully suggested that if my jewels had not arrived I could rent them from Mr. Somebody on the Strand. It was frequently done, she said, by foreigners.

My friend at the embassy was politely surprised that Tom's wife would think of renting real or imitation jewels. In the end I insisted upon going without jewels. I had the required plumes in my hair, and the veil that was correct form at court, and my lovely evening gown and pearl-embroidered slippers, which were to me like Cinderella's at the ball.

Before I left the hotel I asked Tom to

look at me critically. I was still young—very young, very much in love, and unacquainted with the ways of the world, and so heaven came down into my heart when Tom took me into his arms and, kissing me, said: "There was never such a lovely queen."

It was about three o'clock when we reached the Pimlico entrance. Guards were on duty, and men who looked like princes or very important personages in costume, white stockings, black pumps, buckles, breeches, and gay coats, stood at the door. Inside the hall a gold carpet stretched to the marble stairs. It was a wonderful place, and I wanted to stop and look. I was conscious of being a "rubber-neck." I might never see another palace again.

We were guided up wonderful stairs and led into a sumptuous room, where, with the other guests, we waited for the arrival of the queen and the royal family. No one does anything or says anything at a salon.

A "drawing-room" is a sacred rite in England. It is recorded on the first page of the news, taking precedence over wars, decisions of supreme courts, famines, and international controversies. Her Majesty receives. To the Englishman, to be presented at court is to be set up in England as class, to be worshiped by those who have not been in the presence of the queen, and to pay a little more to the butcher and milliner.

I should have loved that "drawing-room" if I could have avoided the presentation. It was an impressive picture — the queen with a face like a royal coin, a fine, generous forehead and beautiful nose, her intelligent and kindly eyes, her ample figure, her dignity come from long, long years of rule. Back of her the Prince of Wales and the Prime Minister, who in later years I found myself always comparing to little Mr. Carnegie, the Viscount Curzon with his royal look, and

in the foreground Sir S. Ponsonby-Fane, in white silk stockings, pumps and buckles, with sword and gold lace, and high-collared swallow-tailed coat. I admired the queen's black moiré dress, her headdress of priceless lace, her diamonds, her high-necked dress held together with more diamonds, and her black gloves, in striking contrast to our own. I was enjoying the picture.

Then my name was called.

I HAD been thinking such kindly things of England — Mr. Balfour fighting for general education; Mr. Gladstone struggling to make England push Turkey back and save Greece; all England raising money for the fire sufferers of Paris and the Indian famine. What a humanitarian race they were! I felt as pro-England as any of the satellites in that room, and almost as much awed. But back of it all was a natural United States be-natural-as-you-were-born

As I looked into the eyes of the queen, I held out my hand. *Page* 47.

impulse. Neither Back Bay Boston nor Tom's Philadelphia friends had been able to repress it. When my name was called and I stepped up, I made the little bow I had practised for hours the day before and that morning; and then, as I looked into the eyes of the queen, I held out my hand! It was the instinctive action of a free-born American.

I have realized in the years since what a real queen she was. Smiling, she extended her hand — but not to be touched. It was a little wave, a little imitation of my own impulsive outstretching to a friend; then her eyes went to the next person, and I was on my way, having been presented at court and done what "is not done" in England.

Tom's mission in England was important. He had friends, and there were distinguished people in England who regarded him and his family of sufficient value to "take us aboard." They were most gra-

cious and kindly. But Tom's eyes were not smiling.

THAT night my husband said some very frank things to me. His position, and even the credit of our country to some extent, depended upon our conduct. He did not say he was ashamed of me, and in my heart I do not think he was; but he regretted that I had not been trained in the little things upon which England put so much weight. He suggested my employing a social secretary.

"What I need, Tom," I said, "is a teacher. You have told me these customs are not important. They *are* important. I need some one to teach them to me, and I propose to get a teacher."

In the personal columns of the *Times* I had read this advertisement:

A lady of aristocratic birth and social training desires to be of service to a good-paying guest.

I swallowed my pride and answered it.

I was not her paying guest, but I employed this Scotch lady of aristocratic birth and social experience.

On the first day at luncheon, which we ate privately in my apartment, she said: "In England a knife is held as you hold a pen, the handle coming up above the thumb and between the thumb and first finger." My sense of humor permitted me to ask, after trying it once, "What do you do when the meat is tough?" The Scotch aristocrat never smiled. "It is n't," she answered.

I was humiliated and a little soul-sick before that luncheon ended. I had been told to break each bite of my bread; a lady never bites a piece of bread. I had been told to use a knife to separate my fish, when I had learned, oh, so carefully, in America to eat fish with a fork and a piece of bread. I might have laughed about it all had not so much been at stake, even Tom's respect.

III

THE Scotch lady of aristocratic birth and social experience lived with me one terrible week. On the seventh day I came home from shopping with presents for the twins back in Wisconsin. A day or so earlier, while my mentor was out of the room, I had asked the chef waiter of our floor about himself and his family, and found that his family too included twins. So with the present for my family I also brought some for his.

Mr. MacLeod, the member of Parliament from Scotland, and Lord Lansdowne happened to be calling when I arrived, and Tom and the Scotch lady were there. The chef waiter was taking the coats of the gentlemen callers. I received the guests, acknowledged the introductions, and then, as I removed my own coat, I handed him the little package.

When we were alone the Scotch lady turned to me. "In England," she said, "ladies never converse with their servants, particularly in the presence of guests."

Then she sealed her doom. "Ladies never make gifts to their servants," she added. "Their secretaries, housekeepers, or companions disburse their bounty."

I remembered the old U. S. A. An American chef waiter might hope to be the father of a President. On the ranch I had cooked for men of less education and much worse manners than this domestic who brought my athletic husband's breakfast to his bedside and who happened to be the proud father of twins.

I would learn table manners from an English lady of aristocratic birth and social experience; but when it came to the human act of a little gift to a faithful servant, I declared my American independence.

I was homesick for Wisconsin, homesick for real and simple people. I wanted to go home!

That night Tom and I had our first real quarrel, and it was over my dismissal of the Scotch lady of aristocratic birth.

Life became intolerable for a while. I dragged through days of bitter homesickness. Nothing seemed real. No one seemed sincere. Life was a stage. Everybody seemed to be acting a part and speaking their pieces with guttural voices. Even my husband's voice sounded different — or else I realized for the first time that Boston apes London English. Tom had learned his mother tongue in Boston, and now suddenly he seemed like a foreigner to me simply because he spoke like these other foreigners. The sun went out of my heaven. I was dumb with loneliness and sick with the fear of lost faith. Could it be that my husband was affecting these Eng-

lish mannerisms? Certainly he seemed at home in England, while I seemed to be adrift, alone in an arctic ocean.

I had no friend in England, and more and more my husband's special work was engrossing him. When we were together I felt tongue-tied. He had tried to be gentle with me; but I was strange in this world of his, and lonely and sensitive. I had dreamed so much of this world, and now that I was in it, it was false and petty. I longed for the United States, for my Northwest, for my hills and wide, far plains. I wanted to meet somebody from Madison who smiled like a friend.

One day Tom looked at me searchingly, and said I must be ill.

I confessed to a little homesickness. Tom became very attentive. He took me sightseeing. We lunched at the quaint inn where Dickens found his inspiration for "Pickwick Papers" and where the literary lights

of London foregathered and still foregather for luncheon. We sat in one of the cozy little stalls — just Tom and I.

Suddenly it swept over me that life had gone all wrong. Here was a dream come true, and no joy in my heart. Tom asked me for my thoughts. I told him, quite frankly, I was thinking of home. I was thinking of mother in her cotton house dress with her knitted shawl around her shoulders, of father in his jeans and high boots tramping over the range with the men; I saw the cow and the pigs and the chickens, the smelly corral and the water hole, the twins trying to rub each other's face in the mud. And I was thinking — Tom wouldn't fit into my world, and I could not belong to his. That was the second time I heard Tom swear. He wanted to know what kind of a —— snob I thought he was. He'd be as much at home with dad on the ranch as he was in London. "The fault is with you,"

he said. "You're not adaptable, and you don't try to be."

Tom didn't understand. He never did. In all the years together, which he made so rich and happy, Tom never understood how hard and bitter a school was that first year of my married life.

But Tom did try to give me a good time in London. He took me to interesting places and we were entertained by a number of people, mostly ponderous and stupid. Tom did not suggest that we entertain in our turn. I think he felt I was not ready for it, although even in after years, when we talked frankly about many things, he would never admit this.

I shall never forget my first week-end party in England. I was not well, and Tom, manlike, felt sure the change, a trip down to Essex and new people, would do me good. The thought of the country and a visit with some good simple country folk

appealed to me too, so I packed the bags and met Tom at Victoria Station at eleven o'clock. Alas! It is a far cry from a Montana ranch to a gentleman's estate in England! My vision of a quiet visit "down on a farm" vanished the minute we stepped off the train. Liveried coachmen collected our baggage. They seemed to be discussing something; then I heard Tom say: "I guess that's all. I'll wire back for the rest of it."

We were led to a handsome cart drawn by a fine tandem team, and Tom and I were alone for a minute.

"My God, Mary!" he burst out, "didn't you bring any clothes for us?"

"I certainly have," I retorted, sure I was in the right this time. "Your nightshirt and my nightgown; your toilet articles and mine; a change of underclothes; a clean shirt and two collars for you, and my new striped silk waist."

I shall never forget Tom's expression.

"Do you know where we are going?" he groaned. "To one of the grandest houses in England! Oh, Lord! I ought to have told you. You'll need all the clothes you have down here. And—and a valet and maid will unpack the bags—oh, hell!" After more of the same kind of talk, he began to cook up some yarn to tell the valet.

Suddenly all that is free-born in me rose to the surface.

"Is it the thing for gentlemen to be afraid of the valet?" I asked my husband. "Does a servant regulate your life and set your standards?"

Tom was quiet for several moments; then he took my hand and said very earnestly: "Mary, don't you ever lose your respect for the real things. It will save both of us." After a while he added: "Just the same, I'll have to lie out of this baggage hole."

He did, in a very casual, laughing way—

such a positive set of lies that I marveled and began to wonder how much of Tom was acting and how much was real.

Tom went back to London on the next train, and reached the "farm" with our baggage before it was time to dress for the eight-o'clock dinner.

The dinner was long and stupid. After dinner the women went into the drawing-room and gossiped about politics and personalities until the men joined them, when they sat down to cards. I did not know how to play cards, and so was left with a garrulous old woman who had eaten and drunk over-much.

It had been a long day for me. I was ill and tired. Suddenly sleep began to overpower me. I batted my eyes to keep them open. I tried looking at the crystal lights, but my leaden eyes could not face them. The constant drone of that old woman was

putting me to sleep. I tried to say a few words now and then to wake myself. I felt myself slipping. Once my head dropped and came up with a jerk. I watched the great French clock. Its hands did not seem to move. I looked at Tom. He was absorbed in his game. I could not endure it another minute. I went over and said good night to my hostess who had spoken to me only once since my arrival.

Drowsy as I was, I noticed she seemed surprised. "Oh, no," I told her; "I am not ill, only very sleepy."

How good my pillow felt!

The next morning Tom was cross. I had made a *faux pas*. I had shown I was bored and peeved and had gone to bed before the hostess indicated it was bedtime. It "was n't done" in England.

"What do you do if you can't keep awake?" I asked.

"You slip out quietly, go to your room

ask a maid to call you after you have had forty winks, then you go back and pretend you are having a good time," said Tom.

There were some bitter hours after we got back to London. But Tom won, and I promised to get a companion. Then there came into my life the most wonderful of friends. She was the widow of a British Army officer who had been killed in India, and her only child was dead. She was a woman of education and heart; she understood my needs, all of them, and I interested her. She had seen great suffering; she had a deep feeling for humanity and an honest desire to be of use in the world. In the English register my companion was listed as the Honorable Evelyn, but we quickly got down to Mary and Eve. We loved each other. Eve went to France with us a few months later. She made me talk French with her.

My first formal dinner in France was a

My first formal dinner in France was like a great family party. *Page* 60.

pleasant surprise. It was like a great family party — not dull and quiet like the English dinner, and ever so much more fun. Everybody participated. If there was one lion at the table, everybody shared him.

THERE is something in being born on a silken couch. Nothing surprises you. You are at ease anywhere in the world. Eve fitted into Paris as naturally as in her native London. I began to feel at home there myself. It was a city of happy people — care free, natural, sympathetic. There was a lack of restraint which, after the oppressive dignity of London, was a rare treat. No one was critical. Every one accepted my halting and faulty French without ridicule or condescension. The amiability and the friendliness of the French people thawed my heart and began to lift me out of my slough of homesickness. Happiness came back to me.

There had been hours in England when only the knowledge that a woman's rarest gift was coming to me, and that Tom was proud and happy about it, kept me from running away — back to the simple life of my own United States.

I WAS homesick for mother. Babies were a mystery to me, although I had helped mother with all of hers. We had buried three of them in homemade coffins — pioneering is a ruthless scythe, and only the fit survive. I began to understand my mother and the glory in the character which never faltered, although she was alone and life had been hard. How could I whine when I had Tom and a good friend — and life was like a playground?

I loved the French. They regard life with a frankness which sometimes shocked my reserved Boston husband. He never accepted intimacy. The restraint of old

England was still in his blood. The free winds of the prairie had swept it from mine.

My new friends in Paris discovered my happy secret. It was my all-absorbing thought, and I was delighted to be able to discuss it frankly. Motherhood is the great and natural event in the life of a woman in France, and no one makes a secret of it. I was very happy in Paris. And then — Tom had to go to Vienna.

Not even Tom, Eve, and the promised baby could make me happy there.

In all the world I had seen no place where the line of class distinction was so closely drawn, where social customs were so rigid and court forms so sacred, as at the Austrian capital. Learning the social customs of Vienna seemed as endless as counting the pebbles on the beach — and about as useful. The clock regulated our habits in Vienna. Up to eleven o'clock certain

attire was proper. If your watch stopped you were sure to break a social law. I once saw a distinguished diplomat in distress because he found himself at an official function at eleven-thirty with a black tie — or without one, I have forgotten which!

At first it offended me to receive an invitation — or a command — to appear at a formal function, with an accompanying slip telling exactly what to wear. Then I laughed about it.

Finally I rebelled. On the plea of ill health, I made Tom do the social honors for me, while Eve and I did the museums and the galleries and the music fêtes.

Years later I went back to Vienna, and I did not discredit my country. But I never loved the city. I enjoyed its art, its fascinating shops, its picturesque streets and people, and its beautiful women. But for me Vienna has the faults of France and England, the poverty and arrogance of

London, and the frivolity of Paris, without their redeeming qualities.

So I was glad to return to England. The second day in London, Tom took me to an exhibition important in the art world, or at least in the official life of London. Everybody who was somebody was there. I saw the Princess of Wales and the Marquis of Salisbury, who was then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. I saw Mr. Balfour, so handsome and gracious that I refused to believe there had ever been cause to call him "Bloody Balfour." There was something kingly about him — yet he was simply Mr. Balfour. Years afterward I realized that to know Mr. Balfour is either to worship him or hate him. No one takes the middle course.

I had begun to have a beautiful time that afternoon. I felt happy, acutely conscious of my blessings and of one coming blessing

in particular. Mr. Gladstone joined us, and Sir Henry Irving came over to speak to Eve. She told him I had just said that England had a mold for handsome men. Irving was interesting and striking, though certainly not handsome; but he took the compliment to himself, smiled, bowed his thanks, and said:

"And America for beautiful women."

Mr. Gladstone, too, could indulge in small talk. "You should have seen her rosy cheeks before she went to the Continent," he said, and added kindly that I looked very tired and should go down to Hawarden Castle and rest.

"Oh," I explained happily, "it is n't that — I 'm not tired. It is such a happy reason!"

I felt Eve gasp. Mr. Gladstone opened his kind eyes very wide, and his heavy chin settled down in his collar.

It was the last bad break I made. But

it was a blessing to me, for it robbed all social form of terror. For the first time, I realized that custom is merely a matter of geography. One takes off one's shoes to enter the presence of the ruler of Persia. One wears a black tie until eleven o'clock in Vienna — or does n't. One uses fish knives in England until he dines with royalty — then one must manage with a fork and a piece of bread. One dresses for dinner *always*, and waits for the hostess to say it is time, and speaks only to one's neighbor at table. In France one guest speaks to any or all of the others; all one's friends extend congratulations if a baby is coming; one shares all his joys with friends. But in England nobody must know, and everybody must be surprised. No one ever speaks of himself in England. They are sensitive about everything personal. But there is an underground and very perfect system by which everything about every-

body is known and noised about and discussed with *everybody* except the person in question. It is a mysterious and elaborate hypocrisy.

With the aid of Eve, I made a thorough study of the geography of social customs. I learned the ways of Europe, of the Orient, and of South America. It is easier to understand races if one understands the psychology of their customs. I realized that social amenities are too often neglected in America, and our manners sometimes truthfully called crude. But I told myself with pride that our truly cultivated people will not tolerate a social form that is not based on human, kindly instincts.

It was not until the World War flooded Europe with American boys and girls that I realized the glory of our social standards and the great need to have our own people understand those standards.

IV

FEAR is the destroyer of peace. I knew no peace until I learned not to be afraid of conventions. The three most wretched years in my life might easily have been avoided by a little training at home or at school.

I realize now the unhappiness of those first years of my married life. I was awkward and ill at ease in a world that valued social poise above knowledge. From my childhood I had loved honest, sincere people. After my marriage I met distinguished men and women, even a few who might be called great; but they, too, had their affectations and petty vanities. Being young, I judged them harshly because they set what I considered too much store upon absurd conventions.

In the course of my travels since, I have

come to realize that social customs are a simple matter of geography! What is proper in England is bad form in France, and many customs that were correct in Vienna would be intolerable in Spain. In the formal circles of Vienna no one spoke to anybody without an introduction. In Spain there was a more subtle and truly aristocratic standard. The assumption was that anybody one met in the home of one's host was desirable, and it was courtesy, therefore, to begin a conversation with any guest. This is the attitude also in parts of France.

But in those first months I had not acquired my philosophy. I lived through homesick days, and some that were hard and bitter. I stayed with Tom that first year only because I was too bewildered to take any initiative, and because I kept hoping that things would right themselves and I would wake out of my nightmare.

My baby came in the second year, and

then I could not go home. The simple life of my own people slipped very, very far away. We made a hurried trip back to the United States that summer, but Tom would not consent to my going West. His own family wanted to see our baby, and they decided that the little fellow had traveled enough and should not be subjected to the hardships of a cross-country train trip.

So Tom sent for mother and the twins to come to us, and they arrived at the Waldorf Hotel, where we were staying. Dear, simple mother, in her terrible clothes, and the twins, got up with more thought for economy than for beauty! I shopped extravagantly with them. The youngsters wanted to see everything in New York; but mother, despite all of those hard, lonely years in our rough country and the many interesting things for her to do and see in New York — mother wanted nothing better than to stay with the baby.

With all the children she had brought into this world one might think she had seen enough of babies. But she adored my little son. How near she seemed to me then! How hungry I had been for her, without realizing it! I felt that she loved my baby boy as she had never loved me or any of her own children. And I understood why mother never had had time to love her own babies. In the struggle for existence of those hard years she had never had a minute to indulge in the pure joy of having her baby. I sat watching her with her first grandchild, so sweet in his exquisite hand-sewn little clothes, and suddenly I found myself crying hysterically.

Mother was very dear to me from that day. Later in this chronicle I want to give a chapter to my mother and what we both suffered during this period of her visit to New York, for it marked the climax of my own development.

When mother and the children started off on their return trip to the West, Tom sent them flowers and candy and fruit. He had already generously put financial worry away from my family for all time, but I knew that he was a little ashamed of some of mother's crudities. I wondered why I did not feel ashamed. I was very, very glad I did not. It gave me something tangible to cling to — a sure consciousness of power, that comes of knowing one possesses the true pride to rise above the opinions of other people.

I would have given my life, that day, to be able to assure my family that material security which they owed to my husband, who neither loved nor understood them. I looked down the years and saw myself crushed by a burden of indebtedness to a man I felt I no longer loved. Only mother's grateful, simple happiness eased my hurt.

I had never approached my mother, but I

knew now that if her natural dignity and great, kind heart had been given the advantages that the women in my husband's family took as a matter of course, she would have been superior to them all. Yet they barely tolerated mother — no more.

I longed to go home to my own warm, hearty, open West. I stood on the ferry after they had gone, thinking that, if my family were not so deeply indebted to my husband, I would leave him.

I suppose I did not really mean that thought, but it made me unhappy. I felt disloyal and dishonest. Finally I told Tom. There was a scene; but from that day he began to understand me, and things were better.

A few days later we came home from a dinner party, and, after going to the baby's room for a minute, Tom asked me to stay and talk. But he did not talk. For a long time he sat smoking and thinking. I knew

he had something on his mind, and I waited. Finally I realized that he was embarrassed.

"Can I help? Is it something I have done that has embarrassed you?" I asked.

THAT was many years ago, but I can never forget the look Tom gave me. It held all the love of our courtship and something besides that I had never seen in his face before.

"For God's sake, never say that to me again!" he cried. "Embarrassed me! I am proud of you — you never can know how proud. I was sitting here trying to think how to tell you something my mother said about you, and just what it means."

His mother! My heart dropped. His mother had never said anything about me, excepting criticism. I had been a bitter disappointment to her. Whatever she said would be politely cruel — at best, a damning with faint praise.

"She said," my husband went on, "that

she is very happy in our marriage, completely satisfied, and that she has come to be proud of you. I don't know how to tell you just what that means."

I knew. I knew his mother could have given me no higher praise. I had learned what to her were the essentials; I had cultivated the manner she placed above price. But the realization brought self-distrust. Had I lost my honesty and sincerity?

Tom went on to tell me that his mother had particularly admired my attitude toward my own mother, and the manner in which I met every little failing of hers. She felt I had a sense of true values in people, and that the simplicity and sureness with which I had met this situation was the essence of good breeding.

I had not thought it possible that Tom's mother could understand my feeling for my mother and my honest pride in her real worth. Perhaps, I reflected, I had been un-

just to my mother-in-law. I knew what a shock I had been to her in the early days of our marriage, and I knew only too well that even Tom had often regretted my ignorance of social usages.

They are simple customs, and should be taught in every school in America, but I had not learned them.

I was happy that night and for days afterward.

Then we went back to Europe. Tom knew people on the steamer to whom I took a dislike. They were bold and even vulgar, and Tom admitted that he did not admire them. I made up my mind we should avoid them. The next afternoon I found Tom and that group walking the deck arm in arm, chatting affably. When we were alone, I asked Tom how he could do it. I know now that a man cannot hold an official position like Tom's and ignore politically important people. But he only said rather

carelessly, and with a laugh, that it was one of the prices a man pays for public office.

After that I noticed that my husband was known to nearly every one. He had a glad hand and a smile for the public — because it was the public. I watched to see if he had a slightly different smile for the people of Back Bay and his own particular social class; sometimes I thought he had, and it made me a little soul-sick.

I longed for a home for my baby and a few friends I could love and really enjoy. I was not fitted to be the wife of a public man.

It was the poverty and crudeness of my youth that had made me intolerant. One of the big lessons life has taught me is that people can be amiable, tolerant, and even friendly, and still be sincere. The pleasantry of social relations among the civilized peoples of the earth is a mere gar-

ment we wear for our own protection and to cover our feelings. It is the oil of the machinery of life. I have found that men and women who take part in the big work of the earth wear that garment of civility and graciousness, and yet have their strong friendships and even their bitter enmities.

But I did not understand this when we went back to Europe. I only knew that my husband was amiable to people he did not like, and I questioned how deep his affection for me went. How much of his kindness to me was just the easiest way and the manner of a gentleman?

A hard and bare youth had made me supersensitive and suspicious and narrow. I wanted to measure other people by the standards of my own primitive years. Out on the frontier we had judged life in the rough. Courage and truth were the essentials. A man fought his enemies out in the open, and made no compromises. There

was nothing easy in life, no smooth rhythm. And I tried to drag forward with me, as I went, the bold ethics of the frontier. I resented good manners because I believed they were a cloak of hypocrisy.

A few months after we returned to Europe the shadow of death crossed our path, swiftly and terribly. My little son died. Other babies came to us later, but that first little boy had brought more into my life than all the rest of the world could ever give. He had restored my faith in life, my hope, and for a while was all my joy.

People were kind, but I felt that many called merely because it was "good form" —"the thing to do." Bitterness was creeping into my heart.

Yet why should it not be "the thing to do" to call on a bereaved mother? It is a gesture of humanity.

Tom seemed very far away. I felt that his pride was hurt, perhaps his vanity; for

he had boasted of the little fellow and loved to show him off. How little I understood!

I bring myself to tell these intimate things because there is a lesson in them for other women — because I resent that any free-born American citizen should be handicapped by lacking so small and easily acquired a possession as poise, poise that comes with knowledge of the simple rules of the social game. It is my hope that this honest confession of my own feelings, due directly to lack of training, may help other women, and particularly other mothers whose children are now in the plastic years.

It was my utter lack of appreciation of manners and customs in my husband's class that estranged me from Tom. I was resentful and antagonistic merely because I was different.

My husband was suffering even as I was suffering; but no one realized it, least of all

myself. Every one was especially kind to me, because I was a woman. People are rarely attentive and tender with men when loss comes. Men are supposed to be strong and self-controlled; their hearts are rated as a little less deep and tender than the hearts of women; yet when men are truly hurt they need love and care even as little children.

A month after the baby's death, Tom and I were walking along the Embankment in London one Saturday afternoon, when we met a small girl carrying a little child.

The baby was too tired to walk any farther; it was dirty, and was crying bitterly. Tom stopped, spoke to the girl, and offered to carry the baby, who soon quieted down on Tom's shoulder. At the end of that walk Tom's light summer suit was ruined. I expected him to turn with some trivial, jesting remark, but he said nothing. I looked at him and saw that his face was

set and hard and his eyes wet. Without looking at me, he said: "Don't speak to me now."

That moment of silence revealed to me my husband's character better than months of talking.

The next day my husband came to me and said:

"Mary, I have asked for a leave of absence. We are going back to the United States. We are going out West to have a visit with your family."

Two years before I had believed that Tom would not fit into my Northwest. But in twenty-four hours Tom and my father were old pals. He was as much at home with mother and the children as I, and all the neighbors liked him. He was interested in everything on the ranch, and even in the small-town life of the village. He interested father in putting modern equipment on the ranch. He went hunting with the men,

played games with the children, visited the little district schoolhouse, and found joy in buying gifts for the youngsters. When mother made a big platter full of taffy, he pulled as enthusiastically as a boy. As I stood at the corral, one day, and watched Tom with my youngest brother, I remembered him at the court of St. James, and I began to understand.

Tom was natural. It was just a part of him to be kindly and gracious to everybody. I had never seen him angry with men of his own type, but I saw him furious enough to commit murder when a man on the ranch tied up a dog and beat her for running away. In after years I saw Tom angry with men of his own class; I saw him waging long, bitter fights against public men who had betrayed public trust. Something barbaric in me was satisfied that my kind, gently bred man was one with the men of my own tribe, who fought man and beast

and the elements to take civilization farther west.

Almost a generation slipped by between that visit to the West and the next scene in my life of which I shall write. Many things of personal and of national importance happened meantime, but they have nothing to do with this message to women.

I was in France when the World War began. I had been in Vienna again, and in England at regular intervals. I had learned to accept life as I found it, and to get much joy out of living. Sometimes I chafed a little under the demands of social life and needless formalities, but I accepted them as inevitable.

THEN the world was torn in two. The earth dripped in blood and sorrow. Life became more difficult than on the frontier, and more elemental.

I was present, in the first year of the war,

in a house where the King and Queen of the Belgians were guests, where great generals and great statesmen had gathered on great and earnest and desperate business. I was only an onlooker, and I noticed what every one else was too absorbed to see. As the evening progressed, I realized that pomp and ceremony had died with the youth of France. King, generals, statesmen met as human men pitting their wits against one another, desperately struggling to find a way out of the hell into which they were falling.

Twice the king rose to his feet, and no one else stood. They were all too deep in the terrible question of war.

When the meeting was over and the guests of the house ready to retire, the little queen said very quietly:

"Madam, may not my husband and I occupy this room together? It is very kind of you to arrange two suites for us, but I am

sure there are many guests here to-night — and, anyway, I prefer to be near him."

The war had done that. Who would expect a queen to think of the problems of housing guests, even a great queen? And the war had made the king not the king, but her man, very near and very dear.

Many other conventions I saw die by the way as the war progressed. Then America came in.

There is a temptation to talk about America in the war, but, after all, that has no bearing on my story. Soon after the United States entered, American men and women began to arrive in Europe in great numbers. I met them everywhere; sight-seeing, in offices, at universities, at embassies and consulates. I met them and loved them and suffered for them.

I was proud of something they brought to France that France needed, and I have no doubt that many of them took back to

America something from France that we need.

For pure mental quality and courage, no people on earth could match what the American girls took to France. It was the finest stuff in the world. They knew how to meet hardship without grumbling. They knew how to run a kitchen and see that hungry men were fed. They knew how to nurse, to run telephones, automobiles — anything that needed to be done. Some failed and fell by the wayside, but they were the smallest possible percentage.

Those American girls knew how to do everything — almost everything.

Two wonderful girls, one who ran a telephone for the army and another in the "Y," both from the Middle West, were at headquarters the day the King and Queen of the Belgians arrived. With others they were sent to serve tea, and they served it. The "Y" girl, taking a young captain whose

presence made her eyes glisten to her Majesty, said:

"Captain Blank, meet the queen."

And the queen, holding out her hand, and never batting an eye to show that all the conventions had been thrown to the winds, said:

"Captain, I am very happy to meet you."

They served tea — served it to the king, the queen, the general of the American army, and other important people. There was cake besides tea, and it was not easy to drink tea and eat cake standing. The telephone girl insisted that General Pershing must sit down. The king was standing, and of course, General Pershing continued to do the same.

"Will you sit down?" said another girl to the king. "There are plenty of chairs."

That girl had done her job in France — a job of which many a man might have been proud — and on her left breast she wore a

military medal for valor. The king touched the medal, smiled at her, and said he was glad there were plenty of chairs, for he knew places where there were not.

But General Pershing and his cake still bothered the little Illinois girl, who went back at him again and asked him to sit down and enjoy his cake. The king indicated to the general to be seated.

No one but General Pershing would have known what to do between the rule to stand when a king stands and the rule to obey the order of the king. He gracefully placed his plate on the side of a table, half seated himself on it, which was a compromise, and went on enjoying himself. The king sat down.

If any one had told that girl the sacredness of the convention she had ignored, she would have suffered as keenly as I had suffered in my youth. It was such a simple thing to learn; yet who in the middle of a

war would think of stopping to run a class in etiquette? The point is that any girl capable of crossing half the world to do a big job and a hard one in a foreign land should have been given the opportunity to learn the rules of social intercourse.

I saw some American girls and men on official occasions at private houses and at official functions. They were clever, attractive, fascinating; but when they came to the end of their visit, they rose to go, and then stood talking, talking, talking. They did not know exactly how to get away. They did not want to be abrupt nor appear to be glad to leave.

It would have been so simple for some one to say to them:

"One of the first rules in social life is to get up and go when you are at the end of your visit."

I was in Paris when Marshal Joffre gave

the American Ambassador, Mr. Sharp, the gold oak leaves as a token of France's veneration for America. There were young girls around us who did not hesitate to comment on everybody there. One little New Jersey girl insisted rather audibly that Clemenceau looked like the old watchman on their block; and a boy, a young officer, complained that General Foch "had not won as many decorations as General Bliss and General Pershing." Some youngsters asked high officers for souvenirs. Many French people perhaps did worse, but it hurt me to see even a few of our own splendid young people guilty of such crudities, because our American youth is so fine at heart.

When the great artist Rodin died, I went to the public ceremony held in his memory. Suddenly I realized that America and France each had something left that war had not destroyed. A young American art student, who had given up his career for his

uniform, and was invalided back in Paris minus an arm, stood very near me. As he turned to Colonel House I heard him say:

"Rodin's going is another battle lost."

It was typical of the American quality of which we have cause to boast — the fineness of heart that is in our young people.

The day of the armistice in France, those of us who are older stood looking on and realizing that all class distinctions, all race, age, and pursuits, had been wiped off the map. People were just people. There was a complete abandon. I am not a young woman, but I was caught up by the fury of the crowd, and swept along singing, laughing, weeping. Young soldiers passing would reach out to touch my hand, sometimes to kiss me.

That night I believed that the war had broken down many of our barriers; that all foolish customs had died; that the terrific

price paid in human blood and human suffering had at least left a world honest with itself, simple and ready for good comradeship; that men were measured by manliness and women by ideals. It was a part of the armistice day fervor, but I believed it.

And then I came home and went to Newport.

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JUST before I came home to America in the Spring of 1919, I went to Essex for a week-end in one of those splendid old estates which are the pride of England.

It was not my first visit, but I was awed anew by the immensity of the place, its culture and wealth which seemed to have existed always, its aged power and pride. Whole lives had been woven into its window curtains and priceless rugs; centuries of art lived in the great tapestries; successive generations of great artists had painted the ancestors of the present owner.

All three sons of that house went into the war. One never returned from Egypt, another is buried in Flanders. Only the youngest returned.

At first glance the smooth life seemed unchanged in the proud old house. But before sundown of my first day there, I knew that

life had put its acid test to the shield and proved it pure gold.

War taxes had fallen heavily on the estate and it was to be leased to an American. Until then, the castle was a home to less fortunate buddies of the owner's sons.

But these were not the tests I mean, neither these nor the courage and the poise of that family in the face of their terrible loss, nor their effort to make every one happy and comfortable.

It was an incident at tea time that opened my eyes. The youngest son, now the only son, came in from a cross-country tramp and brought with him a pleasant faced young woman whom he introduced as "one of my pals in the war."

THAT was enough. Lady R. greeted her as one of the royal blood. The girl was the daughter of a Manchester plumber. She had done her bit, and it had been a hard

bit, in the war, and now she was stenographer in a near-by village.

Later in the afternoon the story came out. She had been clerk in the Q. M. corps and after her brother's death she asked for service near the front, something hard. She got it.

The mules in the supply and ammunition trains must be fed and it was her job to get hay to a certain division. The girl had ten motor trucks to handle and twenty men, three of them noncommissioned officers.

After four days, during which trucks had disappeared and mules gone unfed, she asked the colonel for the rank of first sergeant, with only enlisted men under her.

Her first official orders were: All trucks must *stay together.* If one breaks down, the others will stop and help.

The second day of her new command, she met our young host, who needed a truck to move supplies and tried to commandeer one

of hers. When she refused, he ordered her. He was a captain.

"I am under orders to get those ten loads of hay to the mules," was her reply.

"What will you do if I just take one of them?" asked the captain.

"You won't," said the girl confidently.

"I must get a truck," he insisted. "What can you do about it if I take one of yours?"

"England needs men," she answered. "But if you made it necessary I'd have to shoot you. If the mules aren't fed, you and other men can't fight. If you were fit to be a captain, you'd know that."

THE young captain told the story himself and his family enjoyed it, evidently admiring the Manchester lassie, who sat there as red as a poppy.

They did not bend to the plumber's daughter, nor seem to try to lift her to the altars of their ancient hall.

Every one met on new ground, a ground where human beings had faced death together. It was sign of a new fellowship, too deep and fine for even a fish knife to sever. There was no consciousness of ancient class. There was only to-day and to-morrow.

It was the America I love — that spirit. The best America — valuing a human being for personal worth.

Then I sailed for home. I went to Newport, to the Atlantic coast resorts. They were all the same.

The world had changed but not my own country.

I saw more show of wealth, more extravagance, more carelessness, more reckless morals than ever before, and — horrible to contemplate — springing up in the new world, the narrow social standards which war had torn from the old.

Social lines tightened. Men who had been

overwhelmingly welcome while they wore shoulder straps were now rated according to bank accounts or "family." The "doughboy shavetail", a hero before the armistice, or the aviator who held the stage until November eleventh, once he put on his serge suit and went back to selling insurance or keeping books, became a nodding acquaintance, sometimes not even that.

I was heartsick. I thought often of those splendid men I had met in France and of the girls who poured tea for the King of the Belgians. I wondered if any one back home was "just nodding" to them.

Everywhere was the blatant show of new wealth.

New money always glitters. I saw it in cars with aluminum hoods and gold fittings, diamonds big as birds' eggs, ermine coats in the daytime — jeweled heels at night.

Bad breeding plus new money shouted from every street corner.

At private dinners, I ate foods that I knew were served merely because they were expensive, glutton feasts with twice as much as any one could eat with comfort.

One day I went to market — the kind of a market to which my mother would have gone — and I saw women whose husbands labored hard, scorning to buy any but porterhouse steaks — merely because porterhouse steak stood for prosperity.

In Washington I met a new kind of American, a type that has sprung up suddenly like an evil toadstool.

It is a fungous disease that spreads. Some hangs from old American stock, some dangles from recent plantings, all of it is snobbish and offensive. It wears foreign clothes and affects foreign ways, sometimes even foreign accents. It chops and mumbles its words like English servants who speak their language badly. Some of this is acquired at fashionable

finishing schools or from foreign secretaries and servants. These new Americans try to appear superior and distinctive by scorning all things American. They want English chintzes in their homes, French brocades and Italian silks and do not even know that some of these very textiles from America have won prizes in Europe since 1912. An American manufacturer told me he has to stamp his cretonne "English style print" to sell it in this country.

This new species of American apes royalty. It goes in for crests. It may have made its money in gum shoes or chewing tobacco, but it hires a genealogist to dig up a shield. Fine, if you are entitled to a crest. But fake genealogists will cook up a coat for the price.

There are crests on the motor-cars, crests on the stationery, on the silver, the toilet articles — there are sometimes even crests

on the servants' buttons and on linen and underclothes!

Fake crests are the first step down, and like all lies they lead to other lies. The next step is ancestors.

Selling and painting ancestors is another business which thrives around New York, Philadelphia, and Washington. And the public swallows it. They swallow each other's ancestors. Even old families take these new descendants as a matter of course.

One of these new Americans recently gave a large feast in Washington with every out-of-season delicacy in profusion. The only simple thing in the house was the mind of the hostess. That night it was a tangled skein.

I saw she was worried. Her house was full of potentates, the wives of two cabinet officers, and Mrs. Coolidge. She left the room twice after the dinner hour had arrived, and it was late when dinner was finally announced.

Later in the evening one of the servants whispered to the hostess that she was wanted on the telephone — the State Department.

She returned to the drawing-room looking as if she had just heard of a death in the family. The guests began considerately to leave.

Her expensive party was a dismal failure. As I have known her husband for years, I asked if I could be of any use.

"It's too late, now," he said. "She had the Princess Bibesco and the Princess Lubomirska here and the wife of the Vice President, and she didn't know the precedence they took. She held up dinner half an hour trying to get the State Department and now they tell her she guessed wrong. It's a tragedy to her."

I confess I did not feel very sorry for that woman. I remembered my little Indiana girl who introduced the captain to the Queen of Belgium.

Her expensive party was a dismal failure. *Page* 104.

I began to feel as if all America were like the De Morgan jingle:

> "Great fleas have little fleas
> On their backs to bite 'em,
> And little fleas have lesser fleas
> And so *ad infinitum.*"

Then I took a trip across the continent, stopping off in Indiana to see my little Y friends. It was like a bath for my soul. Brains count out West. Anybody who tries to show off is snubbed.

You must do something to be anything in the Middle West; just to have something doesn't count. You don't list your ancestors as you must in Virginia or the Carolinas, but to feel self-respecting you must do something.

I was happy to renew my war time friendships. Those who have not shared a great work or a greater tragedy will not understand these bonds.

The same young friend who served tea

to the king took me to a musicale. She wore her war medal. One of the guests, a lady from Virginia who claims four coats of arms, was impressed by the girl's medal and the fact that she had entertained the king.

The girl had married since the war, a fine young Irish lawyer, with a family name which once belonged to a king but which, since hard times hit the old sod, has been a butt for song and jest.

The name did not impress the lady from Virginia. "You have such an interesting face," she said. "What was your name before your marriage?"

"Oh, it was much less interesting than my husband's," answered my young Y friend, and lifting the conversation out of the personal she asked, "Have you read Mr. Keynes' 'The Economic Consequences of the Peace?'"

"I hadn't read it myself," she confided

to me later, "but it was the first new book I could think of!"

That is good American manners and what the French call *savoir faire.*

The Far West still keeps the American inheritance of open hearted hospitality and its provincialism. The West has inherited some of the finest virtues of our country, and if it is not bitten by Back Bay, Philadelphia, Virginia, or Charleston, it will grow up into its mother's finest child.

"No church west of Chicago, no God west of Denver," we used to hear when I was a child. But to-day, the churches are part of the community and even men go. People in the West do not seem to go to church merely out of respect for the devil and a conscience complex, but because they like to. Churches and schools are important places in the West.

President Harding has said that he hopes more and more people will learn to

want to pray in a closet alone with God. There are many people like that in our Middle West.

I say this, because I hope it may help other American women who love their country to fight for honesty and purpose in our national life, and for tolerance and respect for the simple things in our private lives.